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CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 14 March 1996, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Ramaker (Netherlands)

GE.96-60884 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 729th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have on my list of speakers the representatives of the Republic of Korea, Ireland, Poland and Algeria, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 21. I give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the representative of the Republic of Korea, Ambassador Sun.

Mr. SUN (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, taking this opportunity to address the Conference on Disarmament for the first time, as a new comer in Geneva, I would like to extend to you my warm congratulations on your assumption of the presidency.

I would like to take advantage of my first appearance by making some brief observations on disarmament issues.

The Republic of Korea, though participating in the CD as a non-member State at this stage, joins those countries which desire the early conclusion of an effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Under this position, I assure you, Mr. President, of my delegation's willingness to cooperate with all the participants of the CD in expediting the process of the CTBT negotiations.

The world continues to search for a new international order since the end of the cold war. A critical factor in this search is no doubt the mechanism we devise to control military power. In this sense, the Conference on Disarmament is playing an extremely important role in creating a stable mechanism for the maintenance of world peace. From past history we should learn lessons for securing effective international control of armaments. We should also realize that we can gain no durable peace if we approach our task with suspicion, mistrust or fear.

On the ladder leading to world peace, the CD is still on the bottom rung of the ascent towards the limitation and control of all armaments. The CD seems to have taken a solid first step by successfully concluding its negotiations on the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1992. Thereafter, however, remarkable progress has yet to be made in subsequent CD negotiations. Since last year, the CD has failed to establish ad hoc committees on transparency in armaments (TIA), negative security assurances (NSA) and prevention of a nuclear arms race in outer space (PAROS).

This year, the CD has yet to establish an ad hoc committee on a "ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices". In my understanding, the main obstacles to the establishment of these committees come from differing opinions either on a "linkage theory" or on the scope of the mandate for the fissile material cut-off committee. A basic agreement in the CD could not be reached as to whether the fissile material cut-off committee will be convened together with a committee on nuclear disarmament or with transparency in armaments. Whether or not the mandate for the fissile material cut-off committee includes stockpiles on top of the future production of fissile materials is one issue. Whether TIA will be limited to conventional armaments only, or whether it should also include weapons of mass destruction, is another issue. These are

(Mr. Sun, Republic of Korea)

problems that could most effectively be tackled separately. To resolve these questions, I would like to suggest that the CD clearly define the greatest common measure for the different positions presented so far, and apply the simplest principle to implement it. The greatest common measure to resolve the algebra of the CD is that we should proceed towards the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear arms. Indeed, the simplest principle is that we should not fear to negotiate. When any individual issue needs to be negotiated to achieve our ultimate goal, we should simply start negotiations on that issue, without linking it to another issue. We may start with an easy issue and build up confidence before moving on to more complex ones.

Now, the CD stands at the crossroads. If the CD fails to establish other ad hoc committees, the only fruit to be harvested this year seems to be the conclusion of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. If the CD fails to bring the CTBT negotiations to a successful conclusion, however, its credibility in the eyes of the world community will be very much diminished. In order to expedite the CTBT negotiations, my delegation believes that the consultations should be strengthened - both inter-group and intra-group. It seems to my delegation that, without political will based on mutual trust among the Western Group, the Eastern European Group, the Group of 21 and the country which does not belong to any group, a conclusion is difficult, and we may indeed face an endless game. We believe that the raison d'être of these groups is to contribute to the production of an effective CTBT through intensive negotiations. Only the spirit of cooperation through checks and balances among the groups can bring this potentially endless game to a satisfactory conclusion in time.

On the other hand, we are encouraged by the fact that no country in the CD objects to completing the negotiations before the end of this year.

My delegation welcomes the two model texts recently introduced by Iran and Australia respectively. Though these texts are not considered an alternate to the "rolling text", we hope that they will assist us in seeing through the "trick mirrors" of the many complicated proposals before us.

Last, but not least, my delegation would like to remind this meeting that the CD has a promise to keep. That promise is to implement decision CD/1356, adopted on 21 September 1995, on the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. The indefinite delay of the implementation of this decision is by no means justified.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I give the floor to the representative of Ireland, Ambassador Anderson.

Ms. ANDERSON (Ireland): Mr. President, as this is my first opportunity to do so publicly, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Your dual mandate as President

of the CD and Chairman of the Ad Hoc committee on a Nuclear Test Ban presents you with a daunting task. I am sure that you will carry it out with your customary wisdom and skill.

It is not often that a negotiating body faces such a clear-cut challenge as that which now confronts the Conference on Disarmament. At plenary meetings over recent weeks, speaker after speaker has referred to the "window of opportunity" that currently exists in relation to the CTBT negotiations. There have also been repeated cautionary notes that this window will not remain open indefinitely, nor indeed for much longer. This concern about time-frame reflects political realism and not tactical manoeuvring. Either decisive and courageous action is taken over the coming weeks, or we fritter away an opportunity that may not recur for a very long time.

The achievement of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty has for many years been a key objective of Ireland's foreign policy. Such a treaty would be a major step towards facilitating the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and would greatly strengthen the non-proliferation regime. It would be a concrete expression of the will of the international community to stop the development of nuclear weapons, to stop the competition to build ever more exotic and deadly nuclear devices, to stop all nuclear explosions.

We have heard reference in many statements to the essentially small number of issues which remain to be resolved in the CTBT negotiations. Although the text of the Treaty is imprisoned in the celebrated 1,200 brackets, we seem to be agreed that only a handful of keys is required to open all of these locks. In recent weeks, significant contributions to the negotiations have been made by Iran and Australia. The Iranian draft clean text and the Australian model treaty demonstrate that the brackets are not immutable, that with political will and a determination to explore the potential areas of common agreement, solutions to the outstanding issues can be found. The Iranian and Australian documents are more than just resources for us to draw on; they offer important signposts which point in the direction of possible compromises. We know that you, Mr. President, are fully aware of the scope which your own role offers to provide the critical assistance which could help move the negotiations to a new plane.

Ireland supports efforts to achieve a comprehensive test-ban treaty whose scope embraces a true-zero yield; which contains no exemptions or exceptions for any nuclear explosion; which establishes a monitoring system based on agreed technologies, using all of the available sources of information, and inspiring the confidence of the international community in both its effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature; which contains a verification regime capable of acting quickly in response to a suspicious event, whose inspectors can carry out their work in a non-intrusive but effective way and which can arrive at clear results about the nature of any ambiguous event; whose entry-into-force provisions are based on an agreed political balance between the need to secure the treaty's rapid entry into force and the need to ensure that the treaty is ratified by those States for which its terms are of particular relevance; which will be overseen by an independent treaty

(Ms. Anderson, Ireland)

organization co-located in Vienna with IAEA with which it can explore the most effective and efficient working relationship. The Executive Council of the organization should be fully reflective of the international community and should give appropriate weight to those countries with the most to contribute to the implementation and realization of the CTBT.

One of the phrases which has achieved some resonance in the plenary debates in recent weeks - and, indeed, we heard it used a few moments ago - is that the CD is a hall of "trick mirrors" in which nothing is as it seems to be. This phrase has been applied in particular to the precise nature of the CTBT and to its role in contributing to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons. A goal to which Ireland is strongly committed. Mirrors will of course reflect the perspectives of the people looking into them. And we cannot deny that we come to this negotiation with different perspectives. For many delegations - and I number my own among them - the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons involves an at times painful choice between what is desirable and what is achievable.

A world free of nuclear weapons is and will remain the goal of Irish policy; all our rational and humane instincts point in that direction. But we also know that the road ahead is full of obstacles and that there are no obvious short cuts. We therefore wholeheartedly agree with those who feel that efforts to link the CTBT to the achievement of a more ambitious objective than the cessation of nuclear testing risks jeopardising the negotiations at this late stage. Yes, we are determined to keep our eyes firmly on the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. But we see the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the CTBT and as soon as possible a fissile "cut-off" treaty as important milestones on the way. My delegation greatly regrets the failure to begin concrete negotiations on the latter treaty in 1995 on the basis of the mandate so carefully elaborated by Ambassador Shannon. The negotiation of such a treaty must be the next major task to be undertaken by the CD in the area of nuclear disarmament.

We also need to take into account the important contribution which unilateral decisions on the reduction of nuclear arsenals, such as the recent steps announced by France, and the results of bilateral negotiations, START for example, play in bringing us closer to our objective. Although this mixture of unilateral, bilateral and multilateral disarmament measures is an unsatisfactory and painstakingly slow approach to achieving progress, it is giving us results and for the moment we see no viable alternative.

In a matter of weeks it will be clear whether or not we have succeeded in grasping the opportunity to achieve a complete cessation of nuclear testing. All delegations must now signal capitals that the negotiations have arrived at the point of decision, that the time for tinkering with brackets is over, that the time for compromise is here. The 1996 session of the CD can achieve the most significant multilaterally negotiated nuclear disarmament measure in over a quarter of a century, or it can become another miserable footnote in the annals of disarmament.

(Ms. Anderson, Ireland)

As we accelerate and try to finalize our work on the CTBT, it is important to provide reassurance to those who may fear that in concentrating on what is achievable in the short term we are fudging or evading the central longer-term questions. In addition to the conclusion of a "cut-off" treaty, we have to consider what additional work the CD might usefully undertake in bringing us closer to the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Strenuous efforts were made by Ambassador Aye in seeking to define some common ground between delegations on this issue; his statement to the plenary on 15 February on the results of his Presidential consultations provides a basis for continuing discussions. We fully support the call made by the Swedish Foreign Minister to this body that delegations should approach these discussions in good fifth and with a constructive spirit.

In addition to its future work, the CD also has to deal with its expansion. We all know that the question of expansion will not go away. Twenty-three countries are pressing for the urgent implementation of the decision, taken in September 1995, contained in document CD/1356. We share and sympathize with their frustration. These countries have in effect been placed in a twilight zone between full membership and non-member status: a peculiar position which is not referred to in the CD's rules of procedure. But the problem does not end there. A further 13 countries, including Ireland, have applied for membership of the CD and have not received a reply. They have not even been admitted to the twilight zone occupied by the 23.

Ambassador Dr. Hartmann, the Commissioner for Arms Control and Disarmament of Germany, in his statement of 15 February, drew attention to the fact that the CD's membership is at odds with the role it has to play in universal arms control and disarmament. We strongly endorse his point.

It is worth recalling that the decision contained in CD/1356 explicitly states that it was without prejudice to the remaining candidates for membership. Furthermore, General Assembly resolution 50/72 C, adopted on 12 December 1995, urges this body to consider further the remaining candidatures for CD membership at its 1996 session following the presentation of progress reports on the issue of expansion by its President. As we know, the President is now obliged to present such reports at the end of each part of the CD's annual session.

My delegation has an open mind as to procedures for moving the matter forward. If Presidential consultations can of themselves bring results, we will rely on that mechanism. If it seems that such consultations are insufficient to advance matters, we would welcome the appointment of a Friend of the Chair or of a Special Coordinator. We could accept a full plenary debate on the matter including a review by the CD of each individual candidature. We could even envisage all of this taking place in the context of a general consideration of the ideal future size of the CD, if that should prove necessary.

Rule No. 2 of the rules of procedure of the CD states that the membership will be reviewed at regular intervals. What is a regular interval? The last

such review took place in 1993. The previous review was in 1978. I would submit that 3 years, and not 17, is a regular interval and that the CD cannot continue to evade its responsibilities in this regard.

The absolute priority for the CD over the coming weeks is the successful conclusion of a CTBT. No serious-minded delegation wants to see any distraction from that central task or any dissipation of energies. A country like mine, which has already waited 14 years for a reply to its membership application, can show a little further patience. But we need to know that CD members are conscious of the unfinished business and have a genuine commitment to returning to it in a satisfactory manner within a defined time-frame.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Ireland for her statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I give the floor to the representative of Poland, Ambassador Dembinski.

Mr. DEMBINSKI (Poland): It is my intention to offer a few brief comments on the current stage of the CTBT negotiations as well as on the mode of work followed in the Ad Hoc Committee with a view to their timely and successful completion.

Since my delegation has already had the occasion, Sir, to express to you its formal felicitations on your presidency of the CD - felicitations which, of course, I fully share - I propose to turn to the topic at hand. I must say straight away that we welcome your announced intention, in your capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, to come forward soon with a Chairman's paper on the CTBT. It would be important on several counts. First, it would predate the revised rolling text that for technical reasons is normally available in all languages only after the relevant part of the CD session is concluded. Your document would, therefore, offer the delegations a valuable guide to the CTBT negotiations to take home to their capitals.

Secondly, the Chairman's paper would represent a commendable effort to stave off a possible crisis in the negotiations likely to impair the Committee's ability to keep to its agreed schedule. Most importantly, however, bearing the mark of the Chairman's impartiality, such a document would offer proposals for compromise solution to some, if not all, of the sticky issues which have been with us for the past two years.

Given these considerations, I must frankly admit, Mr. President, that I was somewhat disappointed with the cautious, not to say sceptical, reaction of some delegations to your announced proposal.

It will be recalled that as early as 1995, in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, I urged delegations to seek consensus language and a rolling text as free of unnecessary brackets as possible. Of course, then - as now - the brackets were and still are the symptoms, not the disease. While no one questioned the need to trim down the CTBT rolling text, the overall number of brackets remained largely unchanged as the negotiations went on and the target date approached. We, today, find with dismay that the number of brackets actually went up, rather than come radically down.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

We must not delude ourselves that a rapid downward trend will commence in that regard and that a clean text will start falling in place once the major outstanding issues are resolved. In my view these are two distinct issues which must not be confused, even less seen as directly depending one upon another. At this stage of the negotiating process we must really start seriously reexamining our favourite positions where they are totally unacceptable to others and block any progress in the negotiations.

We also have to answer another important question: if our paramount political objective is to come up, before the end of the current CD session, with a definitive text of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, do we need to waste time at this late hour on technicalities pertaining to IMS, IDC and OSI - like: who reports to whom, and how, following an on-site inspection? Should not such issues be dealt with at a later date in a more appropriate forum, like the Preparatory Commission, for instance?

What we now need is to concentrate our undivided attention on resolving the key outstanding issues, which include, among others, first, the question of CTBT scope that provides for a comprehensive ban on all nuclear explosions over and above zero yield, including so-called peaceful nuclear explosions, some of which were actually carried out in the 1950s and the 1960s and proved neither safe nor useful. Second, an appropriate and legitimate balance between sovereignty of States parties and the effectiveness of the CTBT's verification mechanism. Third, the place and standing of the five nuclear-weapon States and the nuclear-capable "threshold" States in the treaty, including the CTBT organization. And fourth, the intrinsic nuclear disarmament value of the CTBT which argues against attempts to establish any formal treaty links with other issues which, however legitimate and worthy, are irrelevant to the nuclear test ban treaty as such.

These four central issues from now on should command most of our attention if we are to come up in time with a workable formulation likely to command consensus support. From the very outset of the negotiations, we have been perfectly aware of the cruciality and sensitive nature of these issues due to their implications for legitimate security interest of States. We were certainly aware of them when at the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly in November 1995 we decided to have the CTBT ready for signature "as soon as possible in 1996". Are we not now obligated to translate that decision into practical and constructive action in order to keep the target date we have set for these negotiations?

Let us realistically assess what, if any, the practical chances are of completing these negotiations on schedule. The time has come for us to break out from the vicious circle, to stop hiding behind bracketed formulas and delaying, for as long as possible, the necessary compromise on the most fundamental issues. In the view of my delegation, the hope for an early breakthrough on such issues need not and should not prevent us from a serious and constructive effort to produce a clean CTBT text free of brackets. Let us, therefore, be open and generous to fresh approaches, like the one suggested by yourself, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Poland for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria, Ambassador Meghlaoui.

Mr. MEGHLAOUI (Algeria) (translated from French): Mr. President, I asked for the floor in my capacity as coordinator of the Group of 21, which once again wishes to address the question of nuclear disarmament. In this connection you will recall that the Group of 21 has already made a statement on the agenda and organization of work of the 1995 session of the Conference on Disarmament, published in document CD/1359 on 22 September 1995. In that statement the Group of 21 rightly recalled that in the course of the debate that took place in the Conference it had consistently advocated the inclusion in the agenda of a separate item on nuclear disarmament and the opening of negotiations on this issue, which the international community has given the highest priority. Consequently it requested that, as a matter of priority, an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament should be established at the beginning of 1996.

In another statement made on 23 January 1996, the G.21 reiterated the same request, having expressed its regret following the refusal of certain member States of the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate on the issue of nuclear disarmament within the context of the Conference, which is the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament issues.

The Group of 21 thanks you, Mr. President, for all the efforts you have made to try to forge a consensus on this important issue of nuclear disarmament, as indeed it thanks your predecessor, Ambassador Aye of Myanmar. Both of you have conducted intensive consultations and you, Mr. President, like your predecessor, are certainly going to share with us the results of the efforts undertaken within your mandate.

Today the Group of 21 puts the following decision before the Conference on Disarmament for adoption.

(continued in English):

"The Group of 21 proposes that the Conference on Disarmament adopt the following decision:

"'The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time.

"'The Conference decides to appoint _____ as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee during its 1996 session'.

"The Group of 21 further proposes that this decision be adopted by the Conference on Disarmament during the first part of its 1996 session. The negotiations in the framework of this Ad Hoc Committee should commence immediately after the conclusion of the CTBT negotiations in 1996."

(Mr. Meghlaoui, Algeria)

(continued in French)

It is the keen wish and hope of the Group of 21 that the President will take up this important issue within consultations at the Conference on Disarmament. The Group of 21 requests that this text should be considered as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria for his statement. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage?

I should now like to bring to the attention of the Conference the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban that it undertake inter-sessional work during the periods 1-4 April and 6-10 May 1996. May I take it that the Conference adopts this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Before adjourning the meeting, and as my term of office as President of the Conference on Disarmament is drawing to a close, allow me to make some final remarks.

At the beginning of my tenure I indicated that it was my intention to continue to consult on some of the outstanding issues that are before this Conference, namely on the question of nuclear disarmament and the question of the expansion of the membership of the Conference. I also expressed my intention to stay in touch with Ambassador Meghlaoui of Algeria in his capacity as Special Coordinator on the agenda. Today, at the last meeting of the plenary under my presidency, I wish to look back at the past few weeks and share some thoughts with you on the outcome of my endeavours.

As you will remember, my predecessor, Ambassador Aye of Myanmar, having heard the various positions on the question of nuclear disarmament, took it upon himself to conduct intensive consultations with a view to developing a basis for consensus on this issue. As such a basis could not be identified at the end of his tenure, he recommended that successive presidents continue the process of consultations on nuclear disarmament. I have followed his recommendation and decided, as part of what I saw as my responsibilities as President of the Conference, to consult further on this issue. So I embarked upon a series of consultations in order to ascertain whether a basis could be found on which to take up this question in the Conference.

I should first say that a possible role for the CD in the field of nuclear disarmament, other than items already under consideration by the Conference, such as the comprehensive test-ban treaty and the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, which are aspects of nuclear disarmament, does not seem to be excluded for the future. On the other hand, for the immediate future, I have not been able to identify a commonality of views on whether and how work on nuclear disarmament in general in the Conference could start. While a number of suggestions were made with regard to the format in which this issue

could be addressed, ranging from informal consultations to the establishment of an ad hoc committee with a negotiating mandate, there was no consensus on a role as such for the Conference in relation to nuclear disarmament in general.

With regard to the question of expansion of the membership of the Conference, I have also initiated a series of consultations both with members and non-members. During my consultations I have tried to establish whether early implementation of decision CD/1356 would be possible. Failing the possibility of such early implementation, I have tried, furthermore, to find out whether any other solution or partial solution to the expansion of CD membership would be possible. My consultations have shown that, much to my regret, the implementation of the decision contained in CD/1356 was not yet possible. Other proposals in this respect, such as the one proposed in CD/1362, were not susceptible of commanding consensus either. Some suggestions were made for other solutions or partial solutions, but none of these had come to sufficient fruition during my tenure to discuss with the different groups or in the Conference.

In my opening remarks at the beginning of my presidency I expressed my special interest in the issue of the review of the agenda of the Conference. In the last few weeks I had a number of opportunities to exchange views on this issue with the Special Coordinator, Ambassador Meghlaoui. I am pleased to learn that in his consultations he is beginning to see the contours of a more rationalized agenda and I would encourage him to continue his consultations. Obviously, his work cannot be seen entirely in isolation from the consultations of the President of the Conference, in particular with regard to the question of nuclear disarmament.

Considering the outcome of my consultations of the last few weeks, I would like to recommend to the incoming President, Ambassador Abuah of Nigeria, as my predecessor did to me, to continue the process of consultations on nuclear disarmament. As far as expansion of membership is concerned, it is of course decision CD/1356 itself which stipulates that "the Conference will review the situation following the presentation of progress reports by the President on ongoing consultations at the end of each part of its annual session".

When taking up my duties as President of the Conference, I said that my responsibilities as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban would never be far from my mind. It is gratifying to note that it was precisely during my presidency that a renewed sense of urgency manifested itself with regard to early completion of the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Following the tabling of two drafts of a complete treaty text, in large part based on the existing "rolling text", an impressive number of delegations made an urgent appeal to intensify and to speed up the negotiating process. There is no denying that, if we want to meet the target date the international community has given us and be able to sign the comprehensive test-ban treaty at the outset of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly next September, we will have to change gear.

The President

At the end of my presidency I would like to thank all delegations for their close cooperation and support during the past four weeks. Without that support it would not have been possible for me to fulfil effectively the responsibilities of my twin capacities as President of the Conference and as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. I also would like to extend my gratitude to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, his deputy, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, and their staff in the CD secretariat, as well as the interpreters in front of me. Their assistance was vital to me in the past weeks! Finally, I wish my successor, Ambassador Abuah from Nigeria, a fruitful and successful presidency. He can count on my full support.

The secretariat has circulated, at my request, a tentative timetable of meetings for next week. As you will see, an additional plenary meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, 19 March in order that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, may address the Conference. This timetable is, as usual, merely indicative and subject to change if necessary. On this understanding, may I assume that the timetable is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to remind you that, in accordance with the timetable of meetings for this week, this plenary meeting will be followed immediately by a meeting of the Friends of the Chair on IDC and IMS of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 19 March 1996 at 10 a.m. and, in view of the Secretary-General's heavy schedule, it would be greatly appreciated if the meeting could start promptly.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.